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ABSTRACT

Intended for regular classroom teachers with learning disabled children in their classes, the manual provides information and/or teaching ideas in 34 areas. Most sections are organized into three parts--examples of student behaviors, a discussion, and suggestions. Individual sections deal with the following areas: allergy, associative difficulties, auditory perception, behavior, body image, characteristics, concentration, conceptual skills, copying, discipline, early identification, fine motor coordination, following directions, gross motor skills, handwriting, homework, intelligence, language, left-right confusion, mathematics, memory, organization and study skills, a parent's view, pencil grip, procrastination, Public Law 94-142, reading, reversals, self concept, social skills, spatial relationship, spelling, tactile kinesthetic sense, and time concept/orientation and telling time. Appended are a learning disabilities screening checklist and a list of tests included in a kindergarten screening program. (DB)

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ACTIVITIES IDEAS DEFINITION STRATEGIES

LEARNING DISABILITIES: A BOOK OF RESOURCES FOR THE CLASSROOM TEACHER

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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City School District
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We also wish to acknowledge the dedicated assistance of Justine Trattner, a classroom teacher at Daniel Webster School, who consistently demonstrates a sincere commitment toward learning-disabled youngsters. She gave most generously of her time and knowledge.

We wish to thank Diane Frankel and Fran Tozzi who provided us with a parents view of a learning-disabled youngster. They worked unstintingly for a year and a half to make this Handbook a reality.

A special thanks to our colleague Maude Polo who transferred our thoughts to pictures which delight, inform and educate.

Editors

Type for this book was set in the Photo-Offset Lithography Laboratory at New Rochelle High School by Nancy Corbo Senior Offset Lithography student under the direction of Fred Todora Jr., Graphic Arts instructor.

FOREWORD

A careful examination of differences between "experts" and practitioners has led me to conclude that the one significant factor is the ability to publish. A review of useful literature in the field of Special Education is usually written and published by individuals who are considered expert, though not necessarily "users" of the systems or materials published.

It was felt by members of the staff of the City School District of New Rochelle, that they were also close to special students, parents and teachers. Because of their expertise and closeness, the concept of developing a Resource Manual for regular classroom teachers by their Special Education colleagues, was conceived. The intent was to produce something which would be used by the regular classroom teacher in order to assist the students with specific learning disabilities in the regular classroom.

Serious attempts have been made to avoid educational jargon and to keep concepts, ideas and practices on a concrete, behavioral and useful level. As an administrator, I am most pleased with the efforts provided by the Learning Disabilities Specialists' Staff, Pupil Personnel Services, Regular Classroom Teachers and parents for the total preparation of this Resource Manual.

A special debt of gratitude is owed to Dr. LaRuth Gray, Director of Instructional Services for the leadership and motivation she has provided to her staff and the school district. I am sure that teachers will find this a useful document, not only for assisting children with special learning needs, but, for all children in their classrooms.

Seymour Samuels, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent
Pupil Personnel Services

INTRODUCTION

This book is a response to the many classroom teachers in New Rochelle and everywhere who are dedicated and sincere in their efforts to help all children but find themselves feeling frustrated in their efforts to help the "Mavericks" in their classrooms.

Some of these youngsters, may have specific problems with reading, writing, spelling or arithmetic. They may be unable to follow directions, remember what they have seen, heard, felt or done. It may take them much longer than their classmates to get meaning from looking, listening, touching, and moving. It may be very difficult for them to work independently for any length of time despite an average intelligence and sound personality.

Unsuccessful learning experiences in school may contribute to the angry, aggressive, withdrawn or discouraged behavior often seen in learning disabled youngsters.

The organizational format of topics and loose leaf structure is designed so that you may add your own excellent ideas and others which you may come across. We have left space at the end of each topic for your additional notes.

We understand the difficulties classroom teachers encounter in trying to meet the varied needs of so many students. We are sharing some ideas to ponder, some strategies to explore, some techniques to follow. We believe that the most important person in effectively planning and implementing the daily educational program for the learning disabled student is the classroom teacher.

ALLERGY

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

The following may be indications of allergies:

Student's performance is inconsistent. (Reading ability changes, penmanship deteriorates at times, etc.)

Student appears pale, tired and/or exhibits dark circles under his or her eyes.

Student's nose is stuffy or runny. (A crease across his nose may indicate excessive rubbing.)

Student has enlarged glands.

Student complains of stomach ache.

Student exhibits urinary symptoms.

Student has ear problems.

Student has skin rash.

Student sweats excessively.

Student complains of aching.

Student coughs frequently.

Student appears irritable.

Student is often overactive.

DISCUSSION

The allergic student often performs sporadically.

One who is allergic exhibits an increased or excessive sensitivity to certain environmental substances - inhalants, chemical agents, synthetics or foods. It has been established that one in five school children has a major allergic disease, the symptoms of which can interfere with his or her ability to learn.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

Many times symptoms related to allergies are falsely attributed to specific learning disabilities. If these symptoms can be identified early, youngsters can receive treatment and be able to function with greater success in a classroom environment and much of the confusion can be avoided.

If you suspect that a student in your class has allergic symptoms refer him or her to the school nurse for a possible evaluation by an allergist.

NOTES

ASSOCIATIVE DIFFICULTIES

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

Student has formed a sight vocabulary but cannot read words after he or she has been taught phonics.

Student does not seem to demonstrate that he or she understands that "before" is associated with "less" and "after" is associated with "more" etc. in arithmetic operations.

DISCUSSION

This term often refers to the process whereby a person makes a firm association between two or more ideas or symbols so that they become "attached" or linked to one another. When this happens these associations become the elementary building blocks for learning academic work.

Since phoneme-grapheme associations rely heavily on auditory-visual associations a student who has deficits in this area will often have difficulty in learning phonics. Although the student may be able to name the letters, he or she may be unable to make the association between and arbitrary sound and the visual pattern. This is especially true for vowel sounds and vowel digraphs since their sounds change so frequently, and they are not stable elements in decoding words. The auditory sound and the visual pattern are not meaningful associations in themselves.

Similarly, students with dissociated sensori-motor and verbal functions need to refer to concrete counting of objects or fingers long past the time when this should be necessary. The automatic quality of simple sums does not seem to develop.

In the area of mathematics a student with associative difficulties often does not seem to learn that "before"is associated with"less", "smaller" and "minus". "After" does not become associated with "more", "bigger" and "plus". The associations between verbal functions and sensori-motor acts help the student develop the sequential organization necessary for learning arithmetic operations.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

1. In order to establish meaningful phoneme -grapheme associations so they become firmly linked, the following procedure may be helpful:

   - on a 3 x 5 card draw a picture with letter or digraph embedded on it.

   - on the other side of the card draw the letter or digraph alone.

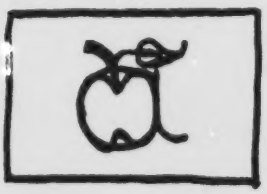
   - have the student look at the picture and name it.

   - when shown the letter side of the card have the student name the picture

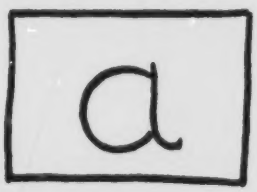
   -have the student give the sound saying the rest of the work to himself.

These cards become his or her "bank" of decoding sounds and they should be reviewed every day, individually, with each student, until they are firmly learned. If the student forgets the sound, the card should be turned over so that the picture can be seen and named.

Side I



Side II



2. It is often helpful to a student who has deficits in this area to have multi-sensory input when he or she is learning phonics. Therefore, the student should write the grapheme and say its name and sound. It may be helpful for a student to write in the air, in sand or flour, etc. while he or she names it and gives its sound.

3. When a student is reversing letters and numbers it may be helpful to use language mediators (to the right, to the left) which would become associated with the correct motor acts (student's hand goes to the right or to the left) in order for the student to correct reversal difficulties.

4. Remediating associative difficulties by using visual, auditory, language and motor mediators to help make associations more meaningful may help a student to make progress in reading, writing, spelling, and arithmetic.

NOTES

AUDITORY PERCEPTION

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

The student with deficits in auditory perception hears but does not interpret what she or he hears.

Student may have difficulty in following oral directions, taking dictation, or understanding oral presentations regarding time (yesterday, today and tomorrow), quantity (how much, how many) and directions in spatial orientation (left, right).

Student's responses are often inconsistent and the student has difficulty with phonetic sounds.

Because the student may be unable to sort out and associate sounds and derive meaning from the spoken word, he is often thought to have hearing problems.

Student may exhibit auditory memory deficits which can result in the inability to retain sequential information regarding story content, word, letter or numerical order of patterns.

The question "What comes next?" is usually met with expressions of confusion.

DISCUSSION

Auditory perception is the ability to derive meaning from auditory stimuli. The nature of the tasks involved in the processing of auditory information are:

AWARENESS OF SOUND: Is the student attending to the stimuli being presented orally?

SOUND VS. NO SOUND: Does the student hear the sound?

SOUND LOCALIZATION: Can the student tell from which direction the sound is coming?

SOUND DISCRIMINATION: The ability to note similarities and differences in sounds.

AUDITORY SEQUENTIAL MEMORY: The ability to discriminate and/or reproduce patterns involving rhythm, pitch, melody or speech.

AUDITORY FIGURE GROUND: The ability to select relevant from irrelevant auditory stimuli. The distractible student is unable to screen out irrelevant auditory stimuli.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

1. Have student repeat what has been said so that you know he or she comprehends.
2. Seat student where distractions are minimized.
3. Make sure student faces speaker.
4. Provide written copies of work to supplement oral presentations.
5. Use visual clues when teaching phonics.
6. Reinforce acceptable syntactical language patterns.
7. Use visual and manipulative devices with oral presentations.
8. Use experience stories to reinforce reading.
9. Read sentences of gradually increasing length and complexity. Ask student to repeat back as accurately as possible.
10. Read a short descriptive paragraph to student and have him or her paraphrase the paragraph. Note whether student recalls the ideas, and if they are given in proper sequence.

NOTES

BEHAVIOR

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

Some youngsters do not react to the school situation in a typical manner. They exhibit a general disordered behavior pattern and do not seem to have the built-in control mechanisms of others their age. These behaviors may be characterized by some of the following:

The student may lose concentration in the middle of a lesson because of the sound of steam from a radiator, the slight click of heels coming down the hall or a car passing outside the window.

The student has a tendency to act on impulse and may often respond without thinking. Focus seems to be on crumbling paper, fingering walls, slamming books and making inappropriate sounds.

The student is always on the move; shifting feet, tilting chairs or tapping pencils. This is the one who gets out of his or her seat for no apparent reason.

The student cannot "shift" from one activity to another. For example, in writing the word SEE - he may add on two or three extra E's. When the class leaves for assembly student remains in his or her seat. Often the perseverative youngster cannot stop running or laughing once he or she gets started. Inability to shift attention causes student to "over-do".

The student may spend most of the school day gazing around the room or looking out of the window.

Additionally the student:

Displays disorganized work habits.

Performs inconsistently.

Displays extreme fluctuation in retention and learning rate.

Exhibits a "forced attention" to extraneous stimuli within his or her environment.

Is unable to put on "braking mechanisms or exhibit self-control.

DISCUSSION

Behavior disorders seems to originate from someplace within the youngster and appear to be precipitated by external stimuli in the surrounding environment. It appears there is deficiency in the monitoring system which hinders the youngster in terms of school and/or social adjustment and interferes with the acquisition of learning. This in itself is not a learning disability, but often is one of the symptoms that form the complex syndrome of the learning disabled child.

Distractibility, Hyperactivity, Hypoactivity, Impulsivity and Perseveration are some of the behavior patterns which are often referred to as disturbances in perception:

DISTRACTIBILITY is the limited ability to screen out irrelevant or extraneous stimuli, making it difficult to focus on a task or attend to a lesson.

HYPERACTIVITY is an excessive or unusual amount of movement considering the age and physical setting.

HYPOACTIVITY is characterized by lethargic or passive behavior. He or she seems to lack interest or motivation to learn.

IMPULSIVITY, along with distractibility, perseveration, hyperactivity may be analyzed in terms of a deficit in the monitoring system. The processes involved in scanning, holding and processing appropriate information are deficient.

PERSEVERATION represents a breakdown in attention. Attention becomes fixated when it is no longer appropriate.

Not all children with psychoneurological learning disabilities exhibit extreme behavior symptoms. There are also students who may have behavior difficulties which are unrelated to learning disabilities.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

1. See that the student's desk is free from clutter and as well organized as possible.
2. Use study carrels or screened areas to eliminate as much distraction as possible.
3. Give a few minutes warning before a change in activity.
4. Reinforce good behavior patterns with generous praise.
5. Assure student that it is acceptable to make mistakes; that mistakes are an integral part of learning.

6. Modify assignments so that student is able to perform successfully in the classroom.

7. When student perseverates the teacher may simply say "STOP" and not get involved in further discussion. This verbal signal may be accompanied by either a tactile or visual cue. If a student's random movements distrupt his or her classmates a teacher may interfere by physically standing behind the hyperactive child and place a hand on his or her shoulder as a cue to stop the movement.

8. A youngster may be taught to follow block patterns on the floor while walking down the hall. This may help him to proceed directly from one classroom to another without wandering.

9. Keep a supply of self-directed activities or games to be used during transitional times.

10. If you have an acting-out or extremely lethargic or withdrawn student in your classroom whom you are concerned about, refer him or her to the pupil personnel team in your school for further evaluation.

NOTES

BODY IMAGE (SEE ALSO LEFT/RIGHT CONFUSION)

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

Student may have difficulty identifying parts of his or her body.

Student may have difficulty controlling his or her body parts independently of one another.

Student confuses names of body parts and/or their function.

Student may have difficulty selecting appropriate space when asked to position his or her body.

DISCUSSION

Body image is defined as the student's awareness of his or her own body, both in terms of the relationship of it's part to each other, and it's relationship to it's surrounding environment. Youngsters with learning disabilities often have distorted body images.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

1. Use games such as: Pin the Tail on the Donkey; Follow the Leader; Hokey Pokey; Simon Says.

2. Climbing on monkey bars, drawing people, modeling clay figures, puzzles of people, doll play are appropriate activities.

3. Student awareness of his or her own body can be developed by having the student lie down on a large sheet of paper and have another student trace the outlines of his or her body. This can be colored, cut out and hung up.

4. At recess time or at other appropriate time, have student engage in a variety of activities defining body parts.

5. Have student pantomime action of community helper such as bus driver policeman directing traffic, etc. to determine what parts of the body are used.

6. Prepare pictures of people with different body parts missing. Ask student to tell what is missing or have him or her draw in the missing part.

7. The student is asked to close his or her eyes and the teacher touches him. He or she must then identify the part that was touched.

8. Student draws and cuts up large self-portrait. Pieces are mixed up and student must reassemble.

9. Draw body parts on the board and ask student to touch the same part on himself, as it is drawn.

10. Older student can be helped through activities like dancing, calisthenics, sports and charades.

NOTES

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN SERVED

in the

LEARNING DISABILITY RESOURCE PROGRAM

The child with a learning disability appears to be of normal intelligence with some neurological dysfunction which interferes with his reception, integration or expression of information in the context of the normal classroom situation.

The following guidelines have been generally accepted as a means of tentatively identifying a child for our learning disabilities resource program. The child may display deficits in one or more of the following areas:

1. VISUAL PERCEPTION - the ability to perceive in the mind what the healthy eye sees, such as likenesses and differences in letters, words, numbers.

2. AUDITORY DISCRIMINATION - the ability to perceive in the mind the sound heard by the healthy ear, such as the difference between long and short vowels.

3. VISUAL OR AUDITORY MEMORY - the ability to hold a series of thoughts such as remembering directions immediately after they were read or given orally.

4. POOR MOTOR CONTROL AND EYE-HAND COORDINATION - the ability to do fine and gross movements with ease. Fine movements such as using crayons, pencils and scissors are poor. Gross movements such as hopping, skipping, running, throwing, etc., show a lack of smoothness and rhythm.

5. FIGURE GROUND - the ability to focus one's attention upon the audio or visual stimuli presented by the teacher and screening out the rest of the environment. Visually the child may look around the room instead of concentrating on the text book. Auditorily, the child may not be able to focus on the teacher's voice and shut out the surrounding noises.

6. SPATIAL ORIENTATION - awareness of laterality (internal sense of left or right) - poor body awareness is visible here as the child seems not to know where he is in space; demonstrated lack of skill in knowing directional concepts as projected in space, poor sense of direction, frequently confused, general disorientation.

7. PERSEVERATION - the inability to shift from task to task easily, such as changing from an arithmetic lesson to a reading lesson, thereby having to change his center of attention.

8. HYPERACTIVITY - the inability to inhibit random motor functions. These functions are characterized by a lack of purpose, such as tapping toes while doing a written assignment. Such children may leave their seats for no reason except to move.

9. DISINHIBITION - the inability to control one's behavior to conform to the group. This child does not know cause and effect so reward and/or punishment are difficult to administer.

CONCENTRATION

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

Teachers often say,

"Student is not concentrating."

"Student cannot stick with a task."

"Student concentrates for two minutes and then he or she is off and running."

"After an assignment is given he or she can't follow through independently."

The student who has difficulty giving his or her undivided attention to a particular task, and maintaining that attention may exhibit the following behaviors:

- Begins to look around the room, draws pictures, fidgets with books or papers.
- Annoys his or her neighbor.
- Asks to go to the bathroom.

DISCUSSION

Concentration is the ability to give exclusive attention to a task until it is completed. Screening out irrelevant factors is difficult. for some students who have learning disabilities and often the slightest movement in the room becomes magnified.

Stress or fear of failure may also prevent the student from attending. Even though the assignment has been carefully explained the student may become confused. Emotionally or organically based inner turmoil may also cause lack of concentration.

Concentration should be treated as a complex skill which may take time to master.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP

1. Begin assignment at a level where the student is able to experience success.
2. Relate assignments to the student's ability to concentrate.
3. Change activities frequently.
4. Praise his or her efforts generously.
5. Make certain that the student understands exactly what is expected of him or her when an assignment is given.
6. Use earphones, carrels and/or screened areas to minimize distractions.
7. Give student only one task at a time.
8. Be content with a very gradual increase in the ability to concentrate.
9. Initially, a concrete reward may be helpful in maintaining his or her concentration. This may be gradually faded out.
10. Remember, that what is meaningful to one student, may not be to another.

Attention to the above strategies may be helpful in reducing the student's inner turmoil.

NOTES

CONCEPTUAL SKILLS

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

The student whose conceptual skills are weakly developed may have difficulty:

Grouping objects according to an essential common property or labeling a group of objects appropriately, such as:

When shown pictures of various objects student cannot group those which are used for writing.

When given dimes, nickles and pennies student cannot label these coins or money.

Identifying the specific properties which form an abstract idea, such as:

The idea: chair, meaning some object used to sit on, having some type of base, seat and back, but not representing any one specific object.

DISCUSSION

Conceptual skills are those skills which allow the student to take distinct objects or ideas and through classification, comparison and generalization extract a common property.

Conceptual skills require exposure to numerous stimuli, observation of the properties of each individual stimulus, and making connections between specific stimuli.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

1. It is helpful to begin developing conceptual skills through the use of concrete objects, in order to help isolate visible and/or tactile aspects and begin to relate these to each other.

2. In establishing the concept of quantity bigger objects can be displayed, grouped, compared, and, through discussion the abstraction bigger develops.

3. Show pictures of objects which can be classified as foods, furniture, clothes, etc. Ask "What do these have in common?"

4. Write two or three categories on the chalkboard such as : tool, plants, animals. Present a picture or word belonging to one of the categories. Have the student pair the picture or word with the appropriate category.

5. Provide an abstract topic such as "coverings". Give examples such as glove, and eyelid. Then ask student, "How is each one a covering? What does each cover?"

NOTES

COPYING

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

Thebirthday was funfor
all ofus He got new toys
She pleayed with big
dolls We saw good books
the daddy got ice cream
mother made cake

DISCUSSION

Copying is the ability to reproduce that which one sees from a far point or a near point position. This task requires the ability to hold the image of symbols and reproduce them accurately in proper sequence within a prescribed space.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

1. Try to keep copying from the board to a minimum.
2. Paper can be structured with left-right margins to help student budget space.
3. Student can use an index finger as a guide to spacing words.
4. The index and middle finger together can form the paragraph indentation.
5. Writing the vowel in red may help to reduce omission, substitution, and/or transposition errors by forcing stronger visual attention.

(See topics on Handwriting, Pencil Grip, Memory, and Fine Motor Skills.)

DISCIPLINE

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

Teachers often say:

"He interacts negatively with other kids."

"Mary constantly tells me 'I ain't doing it'."

"He "strikes other children."

"She "pinches, kicks and bothers other kids."

"She's "always knocking down chairs and angrily calling classmates names."

"He "demands my attention all of the time."

DISCUSSION

The student with learning difficulties may misbehave in the classroom. This is often, though not necessarily, related to academic and curriculum factors. It is important then that the teacher utilizes in addition to his or her efforts, other resources that enable frequent and comprehensive evaluation of the student's specific needs.

Additionally, the tasks designed for the student should be related to such factors as: TIME ALLOWED FOR THE TASK-QUANTITY OF WORK ASSIGNED-AND STUDENT'S LEARNING STYLE.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

1. Standards are important for students, but they should not be set so high that the learning disabled student constantly falls short.

2. Provide opportunity for the student to do some things right and excel in others.

3. Avoid the self-fulfilling prophecy syndrome.

4. Begin a little bit below the student's level of performance.

5. Use direct experience.

6. Involve the student in setting the learning pace.

7. Give the student choices so that he or she can find a successful one.

8. Use peer instruction.

9. Use the high-interest low-difficulty principle.

10. Be consistent.

11. Provide opportunity to establish within student the characteristics of self-confidence and independence

12. Utilize the concept of the Mini-contract. The Mini-contract is a short-term agreement drawn up by student and teacher for the purpose of changing a specific behavior that both parties agree should be changed. Examples include swearing, tardiness, kicking, or "calling out". It is effective to have the student record the appropriate behavior.

CONTRACT

(I/We), Joseph (who), hereby declare that (I/we) will work on my math assignment (does what)

This job will be considered successful when I have worked for at least 20 mins. (how well)

Johnny (signed)

For the successful completion of the above job you may spend a half hour listening to records in the listening center. (reward)

Date Signed Sept. 13

Date Completed _____

Mrs. Richardson (signed)

EARLY IDENTIFICATION

Early identification for potential learning difficulties is essential if a youngster is to achieve academic growth. In order to assist you it might be helpful to follow one or all of the following procedures:

1. - Observe, and informally record behaviors, such as:

   - Difficulty in assembling simple puzzles.

   - Confusion in distinguishing size and shape.

   - Difficulty in categorizing and classifying.

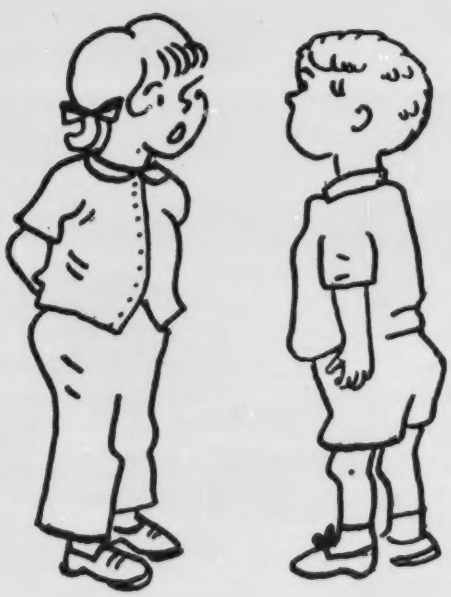
   - Confusion pertaining to time, space, distance and direction.

   - Difficulty in identifying body parts.

2. Become familiar with District Kindergarten Screening Procedures (see Appendix).

3. See Learning Disabilities Screening Checklist (Appendix).

4. If a pattern emerges, refer student to Pupil Personnel Team.



FINE-MOTOR COORDINATION

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

The student may have difficulty manipulating small objects, such as pegs, coins, rubber bands, puzzle parts.

The student will exhibit difficulty in task requiring legible handwriting, sorting, buttoning, cutting, pasting, drawing pictures.

The student may have difficulty opening a book to a specific page.

DISCUSSION

The child with fine motor coordination problems will have difficulty getting his eyes, hands and thought processes to work together as a pair in support of each other.

Fine motor activities help the child to learn that eyes and hands must work together as a team and often hands work together as a pair in support of each other.

One of the most important skills for a student to acquire to insure success in the early grades is the ability to transcribe letters and words to paper. The student who cannot do this well, despite adequate reasoning and speaking skills, is likely to encounter difficulties in school.

Reading, writing, spelling and language abilities depend on eye-hand coordination, left-right orientation and spatial awareness.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

1. Have student engage in sorting, buttoning and tying activities.
2. Games such as bean bag toss and ball bouncing are helpful.
3. Have pupil copy a specific pattern on a peg board.
4. Tracing activities, stencils and templates are excellent tools.
5. Have student string beads in a specific sequence.
6. Have pupil assemble puzzle parts from simple to complex.
7. Dot-to dot games can be employed.
8. Have student engage in cutting activities, moving from simple to complex.
9. Activities such as jacks and pick-up sticks are useful for older students.
10. More complex tasks in weaving, needle point, sewing and knitting are also enjoyed by older students.

NOTES

FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

The student has trouble following written directions.

The student cannot complete a task that has several sequential steps.

Whatever the student is told seems to go "in one ear and out the other."

The student follows the first part of a direction and loses the rest.

DISCUSSION

Deficient memory may cause confusion in following directions.

Student may have difficulty understanding the wording of the directions received.

Student may have difficulty retaining information in the proper sequence.

Because of difficulty in concentration, student may have problems focusing on specific directions.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

1. Familiarize the student with the language and vocabulary he or she will encounter in daily written and oral directions.

2. Maintain eye contact and give the steps one at a time. Repeat the steps with the student, using gestures to show him or her what you mean.

3. Make sure the directions are clearly stated.

4. Do not give more than the student can handle; make sure the student understands the first direction before going on to the second.

5. Teacher should use cues to help the student focus, such as, color coding, tracking with the finger, underlining, etc.

6. Update some of the classic children's games; "I took a trip to the planet of the Cleons and took along my space suit." The student repeats the statement but adds one more item, etc.

7. Have the student verbalize, act out and/or write the directions he or she would follow in any given activity such as: raising the flag at school, putting money in a parking meter, etc.

9. Use recipes from the food section of the local paper or magazines to develop skills in following written directions.

10. Have student bring in and share "how-to" books.

NOTES

GROSS MOTOR SKILLS (SEE BODY IMAGE)

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

Student appears to be awkward in areas such as walking, running, throwing, catching, jumping, skipping, hopping and balancing.

Student is often the one who is chosen last for games and cannot perform well in sports.

DISCUSSION

Gross motor skills are defined as the skill needed to perform movements related to balance, coordination and large muscle activities. These skills are necessary for adequate performance of the above mentioned tasks.

Developmentally, most children are able to skip by the age of five and a half; bounce and toss a ball and skip rope by six and a half; catch a ball by seven and a half; catch with one hand by nine and a half, and be able to control their speed well by ten and a half.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

Like learning most activities, gross motor skills should be taught in separate manageable steps and the steps gradually combined as the child demonstrates readiness. Gross motor skills should be developed and reenforced as an integral part of the physical education program.

The learning disabilities teacher can help assess deficits and share this information with personnel in the school's physical education program, so that allowances can be made and needed support offered.

NOTES

HANDWRITING

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

Writing is illegible

Ruled lines appear to be ignored

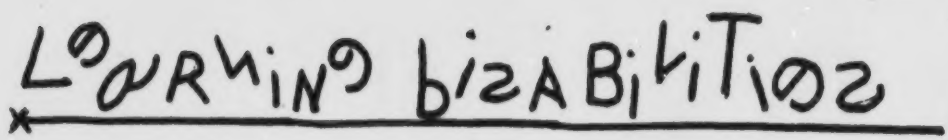
Size of letters is inconsistent.

Letters and words are inaccurately spaced.

Lower and upper case letters are used inconsistently.

Cursive and manuscript letters are used inconsistently.

The student seems to resist making the transition from manuscript to cursive writing.



DISCUSSION

The learning disabled student often experiences frustration and has limited success with written tasks. This difficulty may be caused by inadequate eye-hand coordination, poor pencil grip, underdeveloped fine motor skills or difficulty with visual-motor-memory. (see related chapters.)

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

1. It may be helpful to guide the student's hand or place his or her hand upon yours as letters are formed.

2. Use color cues to highlight lines, margins and spaces between letters and words.

3. Begin by having the student trace over the teacher's letters using a marker of a different color.

4. When tracing is mastered, the student should have a model to copy.

5. When copying is mastered, student should reproduce the letters from memory.

6. Group the letters in categories such as half space letters, and below and above the line letters.

7. Indicators such as stars and arrow can be used to denote starting points for letters.

8. It is helpful to provide auditory directions and to encourage the student to verbalize what he or she is doing.

9. As an incentive for the child who resists making the transition from manuscript to cursive writing, began by demonstrating that cursive writing can be performed by printing without lifting the pencil from the page.

10. For further suggestions see chapters on copying, pencil grip, memory and fine motor skills.

NOTES

HOMEWORK

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

Student never does homework.

Student says, "I did homework but forgot it."

Student spends an inordinate amount of time on a short assignment, and still the homework is inadequately prepared.

Student is embarrassed to show homework.

Student tells parent, "I don't have any homework."

Parent tells teacher that student does not understand assignment. Teacher says, "Student never told me that."

Parent complains to teacher that homework assignment is too long or inappropriate.

DISCUSSION

Homework has useful functions. It extends teaching opportunities, provides for individual assimilation, reinforces classroom learning, and can be used as a springboard for discussion. The preparations for homework and the actual doing of it can develop work habits that extend beyond the individual assignment. Homework that is meaningful is another aspect of good teaching as well as a teaching aid. It reveals where help is needed; in clarification, in procedures and in the strengthening of skills.

The manner in which homework is assigned makes a big difference to students and parents. For the student with learning difficulties, an imaginative assignment can provide opportunities that reinforce skills. Students generally accept homework as necessary, but they want the certainty that their work will be looked at. It is helpful to begin the habit of homework for the L.D. student in the elementary grades. It should be a meaningful extension of classroom assignments.

Homework should never be punishment. This defeats its purpose. If possible, the planning of homework assignments should take into consideration other teachers' classes, family living and special events. Teachers should be aware that some homework assignments can become overwhelming for the L.D. student. Parents should be encouraged to help student to understand the assignment. Their involvement is necessary.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

1. Be sure student is attending when assignment is given.
2. When assignments are given orally use concrete, concise and direct language.
3. Board assignments should be clearly printed, spaced and read aloud.
4. Ample time should be given for student to copy oral or written assignments
5. The purpose of the assignment should be explained.
6. Teacher should coordinate assignments with other teachers so that student is not overburdened.
7. Homework should be corrected and returned to student for immediate feedback. Follow through should take place on incomplete assignments.
8. Parents should be made aware when homework assignments are being modified to meet a student's needs.
9. If a homework assignment is given for practice in computation, use ditto sheets so that only the answer has to be filled in.
10. Spelling should be disregarded when the homework is not a spelling assignment.
11. If teacher needs help, confer with supportive staff.

NOTES

INTELLIGENCE

No one definition of intelligence has been agreed upon in psychology or education and the questions of intelligence have never been satisfactorily answered.

Some writers view intelligence as the ability to adapt to new situations, others stress ability to learn, and still others view it as a capacity to deal with complex and abstract material. There has also been disagreement as to whether intelligence can be regarded as a unitary ability or as a cluster of several "intelligences" such as"social", "mechanical", "intellectual". Wechsler, the author of a number of important intelligence tests defined intelligence as "the aggregate or global capacity of the individual to act purposefully, to think rationally, and to deal effectively with his environment."

Like heat and electricity, intelligence has been found to be more easily measured than defined. In an educational setting, the theoretical issue is secondary to the utilitarian emphasis on individual differences, measuring these differences, classifying individuals into ability categories and making educational decisions on the basis of intelligence test results. The trend has been to develop and use tests that measure many facets of abilities. Individuals are characterized by a profile of abilities, rather than by a single score indicating how "intelligent" a person is.

The term "intelligence" as used in psychology, was introduced as a technical term at the turn of the century. Intelligence Quotient (I.Q.) was introduced by Alfred Binet a French psychologist in 1905. He was commissioned by the Paris public school to construct a test that would be a fair and reliable predictor of the child's ability to profit from educational instruction. In 1916, Lewis M. Terman of Stanford University translated the test and adapted it for American use. Hence, the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale was revised in 1937 and again in 1960. On this test the I.Q. is the ratio of mental age (M.A.) as obtained on the test over Chronological Age (CA) multiplied by 100. IQ = MA/CAx100.

After the 2nd World War, David Wechsler developed his intelligence scale for adults, a version for children (WISC) age 7-16 in 1949; and for pre-schoolers (WPPSI) in 1959. These tests are divided into Verbal and Performance scales. Wechsler abandoned the concept of mental-age. In his tests the I.Q. is derived from a total score on all subtests and is a function of the individual's place in comparison to other children of his own age, in the population on whom the test was standardized.

There are other tests that yield an I.Q. both individual and group tests.

Some people believe that intelligence is inherited and does not change much over a course of a life time. Intelligence test performance is now generally believed to be subject to influence by teaching factors. Shifts in I.Q. have been found to occur, at times radically, with changes related to health, emotional stability and educational factors. Most psychologists believe that both heredity and environment play an important role in how a child performs on an intelligence test. The higher the age at which an intelligence test is administered the more predictive it is of future test performance and I.Q. A pupil's test performance is evaluated by comparing it with the behavior others have shown on the same task. Generally, learning disability students will score at the average or above average range. There are some learning disabled students, however, who will score below that range, but are having learning problems based on a specific disability.

LANGUAGE

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

Student may lack the reading skills of sound blending, rhyming, visual and auditory closure and retention.

He or she may be able to remember a meaningful sentence of ten words but cannot retain the image of a three number sequence.

He or she may not derive meaning from context class.

Words in isolation may be easily decoded but comprehension of a sentence or story is difficult.

Student may lack proficiency in labeling, sequencing and categorizing. He may be unable to meaningfully express ideas both verbally and in written form

Hearing and understanding the spoken word often results in confusion.

The ability to abstract is out of student's reach.

Lack of concept development and abstract thinking is prevalent in a student exhibiting language dysfunctions.

Although the student may be able to copy, he or she cannot spontaneously write meaningful sentences in proper grammatical form using correct spelling.

In arithmetic, student may be able to calculate but is unable to work out problems which require reasoning because he or she does not understand the words.

Student will appear distractible with a limited attention span, often unable to sit still for a protracted length of time

DISCUSSION

There is a distinction between language and speech. Without language speech has no meaning. Speech as we refer to it here is the articulation of sounds and sound patterns. Language is the ability to think and communicate. The acquisition of competency in language in most children occurs before school age and without formal education. A student may have language problems, or speech problems, or language and speech problems. Perhaps, more than any other function, improvement in language ability can lead to higher levels of achievement in school. A student's difficulty with language leads to deficits in the skills of verbal expression, reading, writing, and arithmetic. Language development progresses from the concrete to the abstract and from the simple to the complex. Never suppose the student understands you - always make sure.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

1. Refer to speech clinician if language dysfunction is suspected.
2. Do not verbalize above student's ability to understand. Explain thoroughly what you mean and do not assume the student comprehends.
3. Teach new words and/or concepts with accompanying picture and concrete experiences whenever possible.
4. Through repetition words and concepts become meaningful.
5. Do not teach new words or phrases in isolation. Use the youngster's experiences to reinforce your teaching.
6. The multiple meaning of a word (i.e. fly) must be taught through numerous and varied experiences. Do not teach words simply as labels but also as concepts so that from the outset, meaning is extracted.
7. Make a list of words and ask student to give opposite word.
8. Have student write an experience story anonymously. Ditto a copy for each member of the group. Have the group read the story aloud, substitute synonyms for as many words as possible as they go along.
9. Encourage student to record his stories and experiences on tape. Play them back for discussion so he or she may become aware of usage and fluency of language.
10. Play charades using feeling, action and descriptive phrases to stimulate verbal expression. Dolch phrase cards may be helpful for this activity.

LEFT-RIGHT CONFUSION
(LATERALITY AND DIRECTIONALITY)

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

Student has difficulty copying and reading letters that have their exact counterparts such as b and d, p and q.

Student begins arithmetic examples on the left and /or attempts to begin reading from the right side of the page.

DISCUSSION

LEFT-RIGHT CONFUSION

Letter, number and word directions have not become firmly established for reading and/writing. A student may confuse his or her left and right hand, foot, etc. He or she may begin arithmetic process on the left instead of on the right.

DIRECTIONALITY

Before a student enters school he or she learns that a chair is a chair regardless of whether it faces left or right, back or front, etc. When a student begins to deal with letters, numbers and words, this generalization no longer holds true and he may become confused about the appropriate direction for certain letters, numbers, words and arithmetic processes.

LATERALITY

Established laterality refers to the tendency for a student to perform all functions with one side of his body, such as right hand, right foot, right ear, etc.

MIXED LATERALITY

Refers to mixed right and left preference.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

1. Games such as Hokey-Pokey and Simon Says help student to identify left and right on his or her body (see Body Image).

2. Teach all the letters that go to the right first and when they are firmly established introduce letters that go to the left.

3. Give special attention to letters that have their exact counterparts such as b and d, and p and q

4. Students who are confused about letter and number direction should verbalize what they are doing as they write. Student says, "b begins on the left, it is a straight line and circle that goes to the right."

5. Some students find it helpful to associate b with bat and ball and d with drumstick to lessen directional confusion. Pictures can be hung around the room so the student can see the correct direction of these letters no matter where he or she is sitting or standing. See illustration.

6. Have student wear bracelet on right hand for easy identification.

7. In playing games such as "Follow the Leader" make certain teacher stands with back to the group in order to eliminate left/right confusion.

8. For reading, use an index card with a window cutout and move card from left to right to expose words.

9. Tape a paper arrow to student's desk to help him proceed in the correct direction.

10. Give color clues using magic markers to help student maintain proper placement of numbers in arithmetic examples.

From Recipe For Reading by Nina Traub

NOTES

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

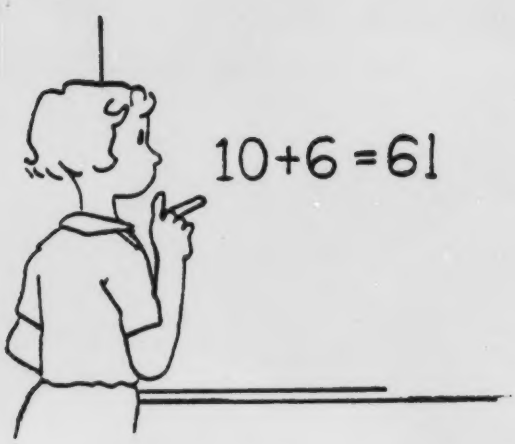
Teachers often say:

"He doesn't know what to do with zeros."

"She doesn't know the first thing about division."

"She doesn't pay attention to arithmetic signs."

"He doesn't know his fundamental facts."



DISCUSSION

The ability to perform mathematical computation accurately depends on many functions: Discrimination, memory and directional orientation.

The ability to understand the concept of one to one correspondent.

The ability to understand that "5" is the same as the word "five" and refers to a quantity.

The ability to understand that numbers are read from left to right with the exception of the teen numbers.

The ability to understand that the juxtaposition of numbers represents different amounts (61, 16).

The ability to use language must be sufficiently intact so that such concepts as bigger than and smaller than, greater than and less than, and before and after are used correctly.

The ability to attend to operational signs.

The ability to organize numbers on the page.

The ability to utilize one's own fingers as a primitive calculator.

It is most important to observe a student's particular errors as he or she does as an example so that the appropriate mediators can be inserted.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

1. Use real objects such as money, fruit, groups of children when introducing, or developing new concepts.
2. Encourage students to verbalize the operation by color coding, circling, outlining, boxing, etc.
3. Use of graph paper for aligning numbers.
4. Whenever possible, the student should be taught how to check each arithmetic example.
5. In all arithmetic processes special emphasis should be placed on teaching calculation with zeros.

6. Use different color magic markers for 1's, 10's and 100's columns to internalize place value system.

7. Utilize playing cards. They provide fun for the student and are an effective teaching aid.

8. For the student who has difficulties reading, have story and word problems taped so that he or she is able to take part in the lesson.

NOTES

MEMORY

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

Student has difficulty following oral directions.

Student has difficulty remembering material he or she reads and understands.

Student has difficulty spelling.

Student has difficulty reproducing letters and numbers from memory.

Student has difficulty remembering information in sequential order such as telephone numbers and addresses.

DISCUSSION

MEMORY: The ability to store and retrieve upon demand what one has seen or felt (Visual Memory, Auditory Memory, Kinesthetic Memory)

LONG TERM MEMORY: Information, experiences or perceptions recalled over a long period of time (24 hours or more)

SHORT TERM MEMORY: Immediate recall

VISUAL SEQUENTIAL MEMORY: The ability to remember sequences of non-meaningful material on a short or long term basis.

VISUAL-MOTOR MEMORY: The ability to remember and reproduce designs and shapes with relative accuracy when the stimulus is no longer present.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

1. If his or her auditory memory is deficient, include meaningful visual materials, such as, pictures, maps and charts in task assignments.

2. Encourage verbal and motor responses such as asking the student to repeat back what was said and have them use check-off procedures.

3. If the student's visual-sequential memory is deficient, include meaningful auditory and motor mediators such as; records, tapes, verbalization and check-off procedures (see chapters on Mathematics, Spelling and Reading for further techniques in those subjects.)

4. If the student's visual motor-memory is deficient, such strategies as tracing in the air, on paper, or in flour or sand are effective.

5. Encourage the student to associate non-meaningful material such as names, letter sequences, math processes and number facts with meaningful material in the environment.

6. Utilize peer tutor games such as "I'm going on a trip", "Concentration", "Telephone", "the Giant's Garden".

7. In small group settings use games such as "Suitcase Packing", "Department Store".

8. Display simple items such as an airplane, dog, doll, book and shoestring. Have the student study objects for timed period. Cover objects and remove one. Have student find and name removed object.

9. Show a silent film; then have student tell a story or draw a picture of what he or she has just seen.

10. Have students look carefully at a picture with a given number of items. Remove the picture and ask student to write or tell what he has seen. The complexity of the picture may be increased.

ORGANIZATION AND STUDY SKILLS

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

Student has difficulty scheduling his time adequately which may result in last minute cramming or incomplete assignments.

Student may be unable to take new information and structure it in a logical format. This may include specific skills such as understanding main and supportive ideas, drawing conclusions, etc.

Student is unable to extract and utilize relevant information which is necessary for outlining and summarizing.

DISCUSSION

The development of organization and study skills enables the student to take new information and structure it in a logical format. Academic performance relies heavily upon skills such as:

Alphabetizing-
The ability to utilize title, table of contents, index, glossary, etc. effectively.
Using reference materials such as dictionary, encyclopedia and telephone directory.
Using maps, graphs, and charts.
Outlining and summarizing.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

1. A personal calendar can provide the student with a long-range picture of his daily activities and assignments.
   ex. the number of pages per day to be read for a book report.
   the number of days to set aside for studying before a test.

2. Help student allocate specific hours for projects and homework assignments.

3. The student can be taught to arrange tasks in the order of priorities.

4. Assist student to develop the ability to estimate amount of time needed to complete tasks.

5. Underline important facts with contrasting colors.

6. Mnemonic devices such as rhymes, phrases and melodies can help spotlight information or tie together pieces of information.
   ex. thirty days hath September.

7. Begin teaching outlining skills by classifying words and objects.

8. The student can be moved from oulines which have been partially filled in to those that can be done independently. The skills which are crucial for higher levels of learning often are not easily mastered by the learning disabled child. The systematic repeated teaching of these skills is essential.

9. Help student organize his looseleaf book or provide separate notebooks for each subject.

10. Advise parents of the importance of establishing a set time for homework each day.

NOTES

A PARENT'S VIEW

TEACHER: "Your child is disruptive, easily frustrated, has poor concentration and short attention span."

PARENT: ("Here we go again. Isn't there anything positive about my child? Where did I go wrong?")

Being a child with learning problems is frustrating.

Being a teacher of a child with learning problems can be frustrating.

Being a parent of a child with learning problems can be devastating.

Why must we antagonize each other? Can't we work together?

The difficulties confronting the parents of a learning disabled child often begin at birth. By the time the child enters school and the parent and teacher have their first conference, the parents have experienced at least five years of confusion, guilt and disappointment. The child is now thrust into an environment in which his deficits are often more noticeable because of academic demands and competition with peers.

All Parent-Teacher conferences should begin on an optimistic note. Some parents, because of an unfortunate experience with "Authorities" in the past, may take out their frustrations on the teacher and the school system.

The first conference of the school year is most crucial. Parents must get the feeling that the teacher wants to help, and does not consider their child a burden. There is something positive about everyone. Find the positive aspect of the learning disabled student and proceed from there.

Parents look to the teacher and the school system for guidance. If the teacher is sympathetic to the problems facing the parents of children with learning disabilities, most parents can be helpful and sympathetic toward the difficulties the teacher faces.

One of the most frustrating problems confronting the parent is "homework". Be sure that your L.D. student can handle his homework assignment by himself or with a minimum assistance. (See chapter on homework.)

Most parents know their child's strengths and weaknesses. Establishing a good rapport with the parent may be the most helpful tool you as a teacher have in coping with the learning disabled student.

PENCIL GRIP

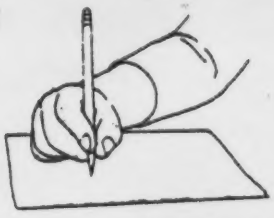
HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

Written tasks are taking an inordinate amount of time and are often illegible.

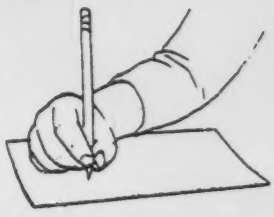
Poor performance on tasks requiring grapho-motor skills may be related the youngster's pencil grip.

The following are illustrations of what are considered normal and abnormal grips:

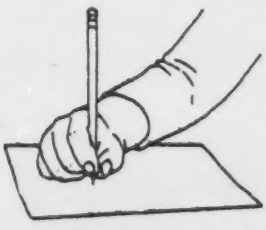
NORMAL:



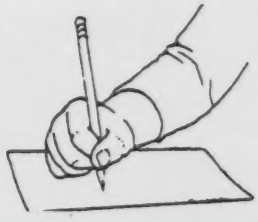
OPPOSITIONAL GRIP



FINGERS NEAR THE POINT



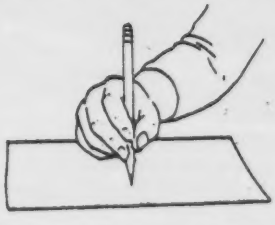
PENCIL PERPENDICULAR TO SURFACE



THUMB OVERLAPPING FOREFINGER

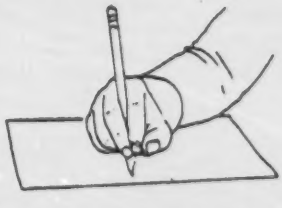
ABNORMAL:

FOREFINGER OVERLAPPING THUMB

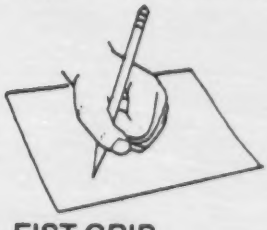


TWO FINGERS AND THUMB GRIP

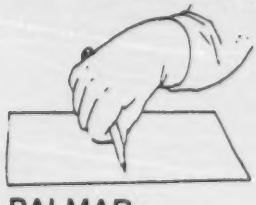
THREE FINGERS AND THUMB GRIP



PENCIL BETWEEN FOREFINGER AND MIDDLE FINGER

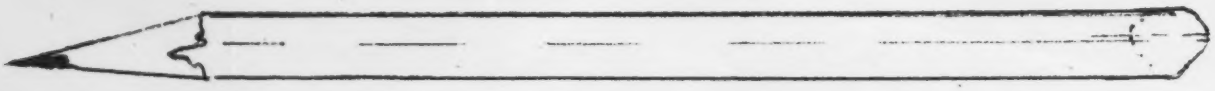


FIST GRIP



PALMAR

There are some useful materials available to assist the student in establishing the appropriate pencil grip, such as specially designed pencils.



and rubber grippers that slide on a standard #2 pencil.

A rubber band can be wrapped around the pencil, where the student grips it, making it less possible for the pencil to slide or slip from his or her grip.

The position of the youngster's body in relation to the writing surface is also important to observe and correct. Arms should be placed on the table so that a triangle is formed with the table's edge. The paper should be parallel with the writing arm while the other hand is resting on the top of the paper. The pencil usually points to the shoulder. It might be helpful to instruct the student to move the paper up as he or she writes.

Grapho and visual motor skills may also be hampered by the student's inability to see what he or she writes because the view is obstructed by his hand. This is particularly true of left-handed youngsters. For this student it may be more important for him to find a position with which he is comfortable, rather than insisting on proper pencil grip and/or body position.

If an attempt is made to change the student's grip or position, take time to explain your rationale to him. Be sensitive to student's emotional needs and let the ultimate decision be the student's. Be certain the student gives the new method ample time before he rejects it, because it will surely be awkward in the beginning.

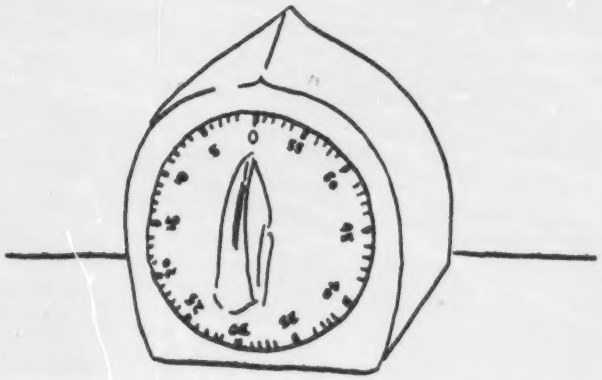
PROCRASTINATION

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

Student sharpens pencil, goes to bathroom, etc. to avoid a task.

Student attempts to divert the teacher's attention from task by introducing extraneous subject matter.

Student asks obvious questions about assignments as an attempt to "buy more time"



DISCUSSION

The student's use of avoidance tactics is generally not an indication of laziness, but is a signal that he or she lacks "self-starting" skills.

The student fears failure because he or she has not mastered necessary skills.

The student does not understand what is expected and is afraid others will become aware of his or her confusion.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

1. Teacher should be certain that all routine tasks are completed before assignment begins.

2. Reasonable time limits should be set for all assignments.

3. Try to ascertain if student has mastered all the necessary skills to perform the task and modify if necessary. (If student cannot copy the assignment from the board, a written copy may be provided.)

4. Teacher may wish to establish a reward system designed to reinforce the desired behavior. A star system can be employed.

   Green star - began promptly
   Blue star - worked consistently
   Gold star - completed on time

5. If student resists task teacher should try to be flexible and accept an alternative style If assigned a written report allow student for whom writing is difficult to tape his assignment.

6. Deserved praise should be liberally given. See related topics: BEHAVIOR, ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS and CONCENTRATION.

NOTES

PUBLIC LAW 94-142
MAINSTREAMING - LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT

Currently, the field of education is undergoing a change due to the passage of Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142). This new act may be summarized by the term it has become known as - Mainstreaming. The law requires the placing of handicapped students in the "least restrictive environment harmonious with the child's needs and free of stigma". This phrase, taken from the law itself, indicates the attempted goals for which the authors of the act are striving.

Goals of mainstreaming have been listed by Robert Herman in his book entitled Public Law: Implications for Mainstreaming, are:

- Remove the stigma associated with special class placement.

- Enhance the social status of handicapped children with their non-handicapped peers.

- Provide a better learning environment.

- Provide a real world environment.

- Provide a flexible service delivery mechanism more adaptable to individual needs. (The federal regulations outline numerous supportive services not generally available at the present time in regular schools, such as: Speech pathology and audiology, physical and occupational services, psychological services, and early identification and assessment of disabilities.)

- Enable more children to be served in the appropriate learning environment.

This new Education for All Handicapped Children Act is referred to as the civil rights bill for the handicapped - and like all civil rights legislation, it creates new problems as well as solving old ones.

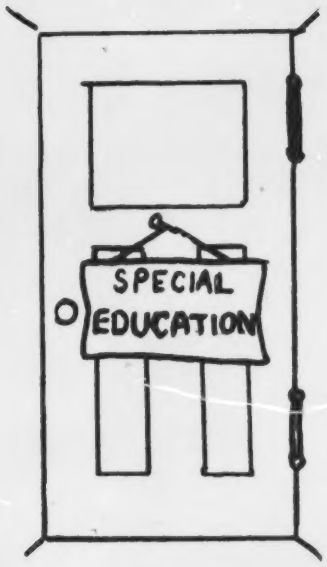
SOME AREAS OF IMPACT ARE

Individualized Educational Programs for each handicapped child or I.E.P.'s as they are referred to, include: A statement of the present educational performance, a statement of annual goals including short term instructional objectives, a statement of specific educational services to be provided, the projected dare for initiation and anticipated duration of services, as well as the appropriate objective criteria and evaluation procedures for determining if the objectives are being achieved.

The law also provides that parents of a handicapped child are afforded certain safeguards, including due process in the evaluation, placement and programming of their child.

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act, or Mainstreaming as it is currently called, is a mammoth undertaking. There are tremendous increase in costs at the local and state level.

Educators all over the country are constructing appropriate guidelines for their districts to meet the requirements of the law. Certainly it appears to be a moral and compassionate law and it is sincerely hoped that it will receive the cooperation it deserves.



READING

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

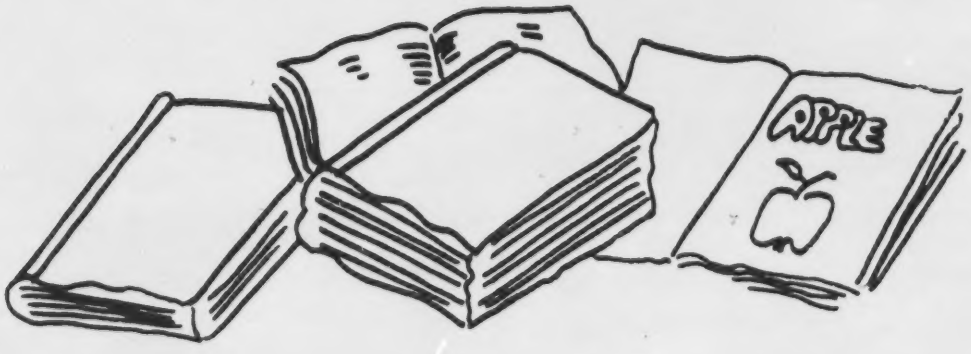
Auditory - Student may have difficulty distinguishing between similar sounding letters such as d/t, a/e.

Visual - Student may have difficulty discriminating between similar letters such as b,d p,q and m,n.

Auditory & Visual Association - Student may have difficulty learning phonics.

Visual & Auditory - Student may be able to give the sound of a letter in isolation, but is unable to fit them into word.

Student may be able to decode properly, but is unable to derive meaning from what he or she reads.



DISCUSSION

The process of reading as it pertains to the learning disabled youngster is a complex phenomenon. The difficulty is often coused by inner dysfunction in one or more of the following areas: Visual Perception, Auditory Perception and/or Visual-Auditory Association.

Mann and Suiter in Handbook In Diagnostic Teaching states "In examining the task of reading, we find many interrelated factors. Children to become effective readers, must be able to:

See a clear and unblurred image on a white field and hear the sounds of the letters and words (auditory-visual sensory input).

Distinguish one symbol from another and recognize these differences consistently (auditory-visual perception.)

Remember the sounds or images of the symbols in sequence (auditory-visual memory).

Relate these symbols to meaning based experience and synthesize the visual and auditory clues with the meaningful words for integrative learning(language symbolization).

Do all these things smoothly and with reasonable efficient speed (input-output relationships).

Reading is a dynamic process in which perception, memory, language and affect must function harmoniously with each other.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

1. When introducing sounds and words use concrete clues such as an apple when teaching the short sound of a.

2. Try not to teach similar sounding letters together and do not introduce a new sound until the previous one has been thoroughly learned.

3. Do not introduce letters of similar configuration in consecutive order.

4. In order to alleviate difficulties in sound/symbol association it is crucial that those associations be made meaningful. (See topic on Associative Difficulties).

5. The act of pushing sandpaper letters or tile letters together may help student understand the blending process.

6. Meaning begins with the understanding of words and the relationship of the words in a sentence. Write on the chalkboard and read together an experience story in which all the words are known and understood by the student. Then have the student write his or her own copy. In this way the student hears the story, reads it and uses fine motor skills to copy it. Thus all sensory-motor channels are employed.

7. Use choral reading as an effective technique to call attention to punctuation and inflection.

8. To aid in the teaching of syllabication rules, have some students wear letter cards to represent a word and come to the front of the room. Have another student physically divide the group to see how a word is syllabicated.

9. Send a reluctant reader to act as a tutor for children in lower grades.

10. Maintain a calm and relaxed atmosphere during oral reading and allow time for student to self-correct his or her own errors.

NOTES

REVERSALS

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

Student reverses many of his or her letters and numbers.

Student only reverses such letters as b and d, and p and q.

DISCUSSION

The position of letters and numbers in space, and the labeling of these symbols often causes confusion and results in reversals beyond the age of eight or nine.

The student who reverses can usually tell you that a 5, and a 5 reversed are different, but he or she may not be able to tell which is correct when presented with both. Therefore when the student reads or writes he may become confused. This is especially true of older students who frequently erase their reverse letters.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

1. Give student a page of letters and ask him or her to circle all the b's. Do the same with d's, p's and q's.

2. Place a green arrow on student's desk to remind him or her the direction in which to proceed.

3. Make lists of words that are exactly the same except for the initial letter (bog and dog). Have student color all the b's green and all the d's red.

See topic on Left-Right Confusion (Directionality and Laterality).

NOTES

SELF-CONCEPT

Teacher often says:

"He has no friends in the class."

"He's angry all the time."

"He's lazy and unmotivated."

"He gives up easily."

He seems to be saying: "I'm wallowing in failure. I see no way to go. I'll cop out. Forget me. I hope you do. P.S. I hate you." (O'Brien, 1974)

DISCUSSION

The child with a poor self-image is also a suffering child. He is deeply wounded, is vulnerable and needs our help.

The seeds of a child's self-concept are often sown long before he reaches school. This phase of the child's formation is in the hands of the parent. Once in school, however, teachers, together with parents, must nurture the growth of a positive self-image in the children entrusted to their care.

A healthy self-concept is based on truth and honesty. It is not the same as conceit or an inflated ego. We must not build castles in the air that will not stand up to the test of reality.

We must help the child accept what he cannot change and work to change what he can.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

1. Emphasize success and not failure. Put corrections on separate sheets so that the child doesn't feel ashamed of his paper.

2. Be willing to modify your curriculum and assignments. One can lower the frustration level and perhaps help the child to do better work. A teacher might give five math problems instead of ten. Take time to give an oral test to see what student really knows if he has difficulty with written exams.

3. A teacher can gear the wording of content material to the actual working vocabulary of the student and build from there.

4. Look for a child's learning style and find a way to teach to it. If the child is an auditory learner he gets most of his information through the auditory channel.

5. Put the child in a position of leadership in the class so that his strength will shine.

6. Comment positively on some personal dimension.

7. Create an environment where children can safely express their feelings about self in themes like:

   - If I had three wishes I would...
   - When I look in a mirror ...
   - If someone makes fun of me ...
   - If I could be an animal I would be ...
   - When I grow up ...

In this manner they can be led to discuss the "whys" of their self-image.

8. Seek out a student's opinion on matters where there are no right or wrong answers. This is safe and non-threatening. There is little risk of a sense of failure.

9. Irony and sarcasm make an adult feel better but they always hurt. Teachers have to know how to leave doors open, how to de-fuse.

10. Try not to compare children. It is better to use the child himself as his criterion: "See how much better this is today than it was yesterday."

NOTES

SOCIAL SKILLS

One of the common observations made by parents and teachers of learning disabled children is the child's lack of ability to relate well, especially to other children. Perhaps, because the behavior patterns of some of these children may be different, classmates may regard him as unfriendly, disobedient or "odd".

Learning disabled children may have great difficulty in interpreting expressions and attitudes through facial expressions or gestures. They may respond inappropriately and therefore risk rejection and ridicule by their peers. If they continually receive the impression that they are not accepted or loved, they may become indifferent, aggressive and hostile.

The problems encountered by the L.D. youngster are often compounded by the inability to learn certain unspoken social rules and manners. For example, a student may not understand how to win or lose gracefully.

Social skills are important in adapting to a variety of educational and social situations. We teach children to do school work; and we can also try to teach them to learn to live with other people.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

1. Read, tell or show the child through pictures, an incomplete story that involves social judgement. Have child anticipate or supply the ending.
2. A short film on a social situation can provide an opportunity for critical discussion of the film characters.
3. A series of pictures can be arranged to tell a story involving a social situation. Have the child evaluate the pictures.
4. Many children often fail to understand the meanings in facial expression and gestures. Help them to decode this "silent language".
   - Draw pictures of faces showing happiness, sadness, anger, pain, love, surprise, etc.
   - Discuss the meanings of gestures such as waving goodbye, shaking a finger for "no", shrugging a shoulder, tapping a foot, turning away, etc.
   - Help child to recognize inflections in the human voice beyond the words themselves. Use a tape recorder and say the same word over with different intonations.
5. A child can often participate in role playing activities to understand how another feels in certain situations.
6. Help the child learn to communicate with other members of the group. Help him to understand himself and others. Encourage children to share their feelings, to learn to listen and to observe others.
7. Knowing the consequence of social acts can teach a child how to behave and to make appropriate choices. Role playing can help him see what happens if rules of the game or of manners are broken.
8. Establish independence. Encourage the child to go places alone. Plan activities that provide opportunities to meet and relate to new people.
9. Games such as charades can be effective.
10. Involve the child in planning activities or trips for the class. Provide a definite reponsibility that the child can handle. Give him an opportunity to work with a group of other children.

Patience, flexibility and a firm balance between discipline and caring are essential in producing a well-integrated individual.

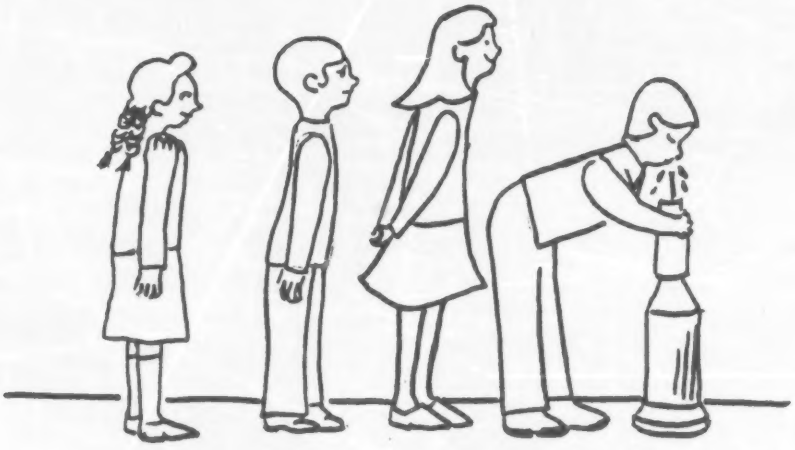
SPATIAL RELATIONSHIPS

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

Student has difficulty keeping numbers and letters in columns and rows.

In written work student does not make proper use of paper space.

Student is confused by such terms as "in front of" and "in back of".



DISCUSSION

This term refers to the ability to organize oneself in space in terms of judging size, position, directionality and distance. It also refers both to the perception of objects in space and to the sequential organization of events.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP ?

1. Graph paper may be used if student is experiencing difficulty in aligning letters and numbers.

2. Whenever possible allow student to use a typewriter.

3. Numbers, letters, words and sentences may be traced and/or reproduced from a model.

4. Terms such as "in front of" and "in back of" become more meaningful if the student is taught to use his or her own body to establish directionality.

5. Involve student in establishing games such as "How far is it from here to the door, wall' etc. and placing different size cards in their respective envelopes. In the lower grades, obstacle course games are also helpful.

6. Copying pegboard, bead and block designs can be useful .

7. Map activites are fun and useful.

8. Use Lincoln Logs or colored blocks and have child construct various figures according to specific directions.

9. Games such as Pin the Tail on the Donkey, Concentration, Twister, Giant Steps and Candyland are effective.

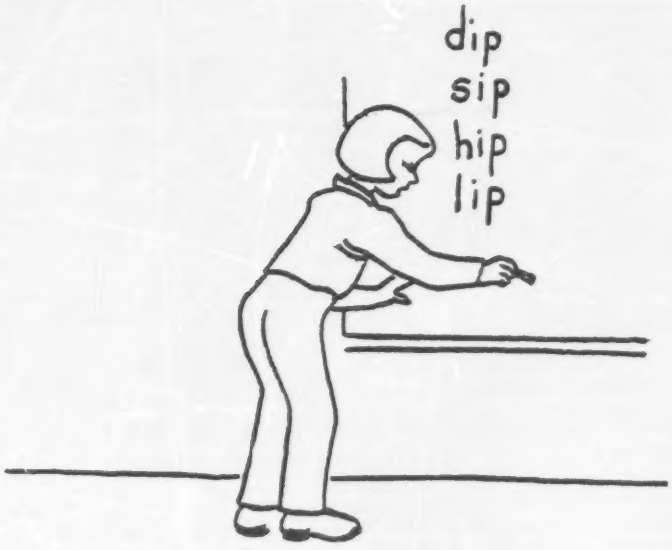
10 When possible send student on errands so that he or she may become oriented in the building.

NOTES

HOW DOES HE/SHE ACT?

Student reads adequately but cannot spell simple phonetic words.

Student reads adequately but cannot spell simple sight words.



DISCUSSION

Unless a student has an adequate visual sequential memory and has formed a firm phonic-symbol association he/she may have difficulty with oral or written spelling. In order to spell phonetic words the student must associate the letter sounds with the letter names. To spell non-phonetic words such as what, pretty, been, etc. the student must rely almost totaly on his visual memory.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP

1. Spelling should be taught along with reading. If a student learns to decode short vowel words he/she should learn to spell and write them at the same time

2. Whenever possible spelling should be taught by rules.

3. Frequently used non-phonetic words should be spelled orally and given in dictation exercises often.

4. In teaching homonyms instruct student to look for little words in big words. i.e., There is pie in the word piece. The principal is a pal.

5. In general, non-phonetic words and words that don't follow a rule should be assigned in small doses.

6. Analyze the student's spontaneous writing to see if the words that are misspelled fall into a particular pattern and try to individualize his spelling assignments so that these weaknesses can be strengthened.

7. Have student transfer spelling words to individual 3 x 5 cards, and use as flash cards for studying.

8. Random House publishes a Poor Spellers Dictionary and some children enjoy using it

9. Color code vowels in red when teaching simple phonetic words

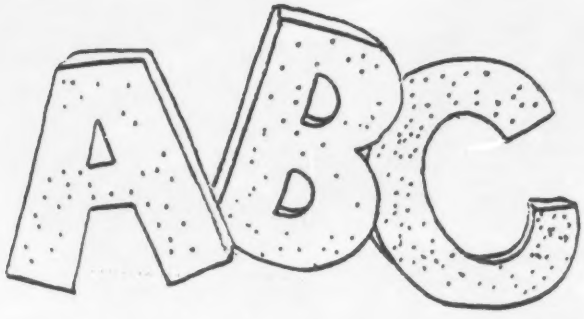
10. Remember, spelling errors are usually not due to the students indifference or laziness. They may be due to the students specific learning disabilities. This problem is often very difficult to remediate.

NOTES

TACTILE KINESTHETIC SENSE

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT?

Student has difficulty identifying and matching objects by touching and feeling.



DISCUSSION

Tactile sense is defined as the ability to identify objects by touching and feeling.

This is usually not an area of specific disability. It is however a sense that has often been overlooked as a means of learning. A tactile kinesthetic approach is often helpful as a road to learning for children who are experiencing specific difficulties in other sensory areas.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

Suggested activities to develop student's tactile sense.

1. Place an assortment of known objects in a bag and ask students to retrieve specific objects. Gradually require finer discriminations, such as different size blocks, sandpaper letters, etc.

2. Ask the student to describe textures by touch, again gradually increasing the level of discriminations.

3. Develop the student's ability to describe objects in terms of hard/soft, warm/cool, rough/smooth, etc.

4. Write letters and numbers on cardboard squares with glue and sprinkle it with sand or cut letters out of sandpaper. Student can run his/her finger over the letter while looking at it. Later, ask student to identify the letter by touch alone.

5. Student can write letters in a box filled with flour, sand, salt etc.

6. A piece of window screen can be stretched over a frame. The teacher then writes symbols over the screen with paper and crayons. Writing will be raised and can be used for tactile experiences.

7. Teacher can trace letters on student's palm while the student's eyes are closed, or form the letter on the student's back and ask him/her to identify the letter.

TIME CONCEPT, TIME ORIENTATION AND TELLING TIME

HOW DOES STUDENT ACT ?

Student has great difficulty understanding such terms as yesterday, today and tomorrow.

Student has great difficulty with age and time comparisons.

Student confuses such terms as before and after.

Student often asks, "When is recess?" "Is it time for lunch?", etc.

DISCUSSION

Time is an abstract concept and children with learning disabilities often have difficulty with abstractions.

Therefore, the abstraction must be made more concrete by relating the concept of time, the language of time, and the passage of time to the child's own experiences.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

1. Student should make a monthly calendar marking off special events such as birthdays, holidays and seasonal changes.

2. Have student keep a daily record of routines noting the time of waking, eating breakfast, going to school, recess, lunch, etc.

3. Age comparisons can be made meaningful through use of pictures.

4. Use a kitchen timer to help the student estimate the passage of time.

5. Frequent classroom discussion helps to establish time orientation. Talk about events that took place yesterday, the day before and those that will take place tomorrow.

6. Write a particular time on the chalkboard. When the clock shows that time student should notify teacher.

7. Have students bring in T.V. schedules. Ask them to show on a clock when specific programs begin and end, and how long they run, etc.

8. Discuss what happens on different days of the school week such as the day and time to go to gym, library, music etc.

9. Verbalize and increase awareness of activites which take place on weekdays and those that take place on weekends.

10. Games such as Clock, Solitaire, and Telling Time, Quizo help reinforce time concepts.

11. To establish time concepts in the content area of social studies, have student create a time line.

NOTES

City School District of New Rochelle
Pupil Personnel Services
L.D. Resource Room

LEARNING DISABILITIES SCREENING CHECKLIST

Name_____ Birthdate_____

Grade_____ Teacher _____

A. General Behavioral Characteristics - Child shows:

_____ Disorganization: unable to work in an orderly way.
_____ Logical sequence confusion: unable to follow systematic procedures.
_____ Distractibility: cannot move on to new activity, stop old one.
_____ Impulsivity or disinhibition: acts in unplanned inappropriate ways.
_____ Hyperactivity: runs around excessively, can sit still for only short period.
_____ Difficulty with abstractions: is unable to generalize or group things in categories.
_____ Poor body image: does not know parts of body, or, for example, if he can fit in a given space.
_____ Low frustration tolerance: gives up or cries easily.
_____ Poor self-concept: has unrealistic picture of himself.
_____ Aggressive or annoying behavior.

B. Motor Skills - Child seems to have difficulty with:

_____ Gross motor coordination: seems awkward.
_____ Fine motor tasks: handwriting

Laterality and Directionality - Child seems to have difficulty with:

_____ Telling left from right, reversals in reading and writing.
_____ Spatial relationships and concepts (up-down, before-behind, frontward-backward-sideward)
_____ Left-to-right eye and hand movements for reading and writing.

Visual Perception - Child seems to have difficulty with:

_____ Seeing likenesses and differences.
_____ Copying from book or chalkboard.

Auditory Perception - Child seems to have difficulty with:

_____ Auditory discrimination, distinguishing between sounds.
_____ Reproducing sounds accurately.
_____ Memory, recalling spoken direction.
_____ Association of sounds with letter names and written letters.

Language - Child seems to have difficulty

_____ Expressing himself verbally.
_____ Finding appropriate words for familiar objects or actions.

Academic Performance - Child's potential ability seems to exceed his performance in:

	Approximate Grade Level
_____ Reading	_____
_____ Spelling	_____
_____ Written Expression	_____
_____ Math	_____
_____ Other	_____

CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW ROCHELLE
PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICE
DISTRICT KINDERGARTEN SCREENING

The following ten tests are included in the Kindergarten Screening Procedures:

SECTION I - COGNITIVE/LANGUAGE

GENERAL INFORMATION: A four item test of child's ability to respond verbally to questions about himself (herself)

WORD KNOWLEDGE: A five item test designed to assess the child's ability to define selected words.

VERBAL ANALOGIES: A six item test designed to assess the child's ability to supply analogies.

SPATIAL CONCEPTS: A five item test of the child's ability to comprehend locational, directional and spatial relationship concepts.

FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS: A two item test, designed to assess child's ability to follow a series of directions in the order given.

SECTION II - PERCEPTUAL/MOTOR

VISUAL DISCRIMINATION: A ten item test requiring the child to match geometric forms.

VISUAL MOTOR: A five item test to assess the child's ability to accurately reproduce a series of forms of increasing difficulty.

VISUAL MEMORY: A six item test to assess the child's ability to recall visually presented material.

AUDITORY DISCRIMINATION: A twenty item test to assess the child's ability to distinguish differing initial consonant sounds.

DRAW-A-MAN: A test to assess development, maturity, visual-motor coordination and body awareness.